

**U.S. Senator Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.)**  
**Remarks on the Senate floor about the war in Iraq**  
**February 1, 2007**

Mr. Kyl: Mr. President, first let me compliment my colleague, Senator Bunning, for a fine statement. I endorse his call for unity in a time of war a country needs to be unified, especially when we send our young men and women into harm's way. They need to know that we support the mission that we put them in harm's way to try to achieve.

Mr. President, I remember years ago I used to see bumper stickers that said "give peace a chance." I think today we need to dust off some of those bumper stickers and write a couple of words that say give the President's plan for peace a chance.

We're going to have a debate next week with those who believe we should give the President's plan a chance to succeed and those who don't. It appears that people -- that people that we have relied on in the past for advice are also now saying give the President's plan a chance, and because events on the ground are beginning to suggest that his plan is already beginning to work. There's been great, a great deal of discussion about the Baker-Hamilton report and critics of the President's plan have frequently held that report up as evidence that we need to take a different course of action.

But yesterday appearing before the Senate foreign relations committee, former Secretary of State James Baker and former member of the House of Representatives Lee Hamilton both argued that the President's plan should be given a chance to succeed.

Maybe that surprised the chairman, but here's what they testified. Representative Hamilton -- quote -- "so I guess my bottom line on the surge is, look, the President's plan ought to be given a chance. Give it a chance because we heard all of this. A general that you confirmed 80-0 the day before yesterday, this is his idea. He's the supporter of it. Give it a chance." That's Lee Hamilton.

Former Senator and Secretary of State Baker said, "The study group set no timetables and we set no deadlines. We believe that military commanders must have the flexibility to respond to events on the ground." and he said, in response to a senator: "Senator, one of the purposes of the surge, as I'm sure you heard from

General Petraeus when you confirmed him, is to give the Iraqi government a little more running room in order to help it achieve national reconciliation by tamping down the violence or pacifying, if you will, Baghdad."

That's the purpose of this strategy. And as I said, there is already evidence, even though the strategy has certainly not been implemented in full, that even the prospect of its implementation is beginning to have an effect. It is clear that the Iraqi government in its pronouncements have already begun to sound a lot different to these terrorists than they did in the past when the Iraqi government didn't always back up the U.S. efforts, when we would go into an area, we would

capture these killers. A couple days later they would be back out on the streets because somebody with political influence in Iraq would see that it happened.

The idea is that the Iraqis are now going to take charge here and not allow that to happen. And in addition to U.S. troops, there will be twice as many new Iraqi troops helping to make sure it doesn't happen.

Here are just a few excerpts from some of the news media, from the Chicago Tribune of January 30, "Shiite militia leaders appear to be leading strong holds in Baghdad in an anticipation of the Iraqi plan to increase the troop presence in the Iraqi capital according to the top commander in the country." and he said -- quote -- "we have seen numerous indications Shia militia leaders will leave or already have left Sadr City to avoid capture by Iraqi and coalition security forces. Army General George W. Casey said in a written statement submitted to the Senate Armed Services Committee as part of his confirmation hearing today to be the Army chief of staff." already beginning to work. The article continues, "radical Shiite Clerk Moqtada Al-sadr ordered his militia not to confront U.S. forces and has endorsed negotiations aimed at easing the deployment of American troops and his strong holders, according to Sadr and other Shiite officials." This is the idea. In Anbar Province, where the the pressure from Al Qaeda has been very strong, there is now news that the sheiks in Anbar Province are beginning to work with us.

One report from the Washington Post, January 27, said, "With the help of a confederation of about 50 Sunni Muslim tribal sheikhs, the U.S. military recruited more than 800 police officers in December and is on track to do the same this month. Officers credit the sheikhs' cooperation for the diminishing violence in Ramadi, the capital of Anbar Province." We just mounted a big offensive with the Iraqi military in Najaf. And I quote from a Washington Post story of January 29, "Iraqi soldiers backed by U.S. helicopters stormed an encampment of hundreds of insurgents hiding among date palm orchards in southern Iraq in an operation Sunday and set off a fierce three day long gun battle during the holiest week for the Shiite Muslims. Officials say they killed scores of insurgents while foiling a plot.

There is also, Mr. President, political movement in the country. Let me quote from a story from the Los Angeles Times of February 1. Sunni and Arab lawmakers announced plans Wednesday to form two new blocs in parliament they hope will break away from the ethnic and religious mold of current alliances and ease strife. There's also been a lot of talk about what the mission of our forces should be, one of which is to help secure the borders. This is something else that the Iraqis have pledged that they need to do, particularly in their relationships with Syria and Iran.

Quoting from the Los Angeles Times story, "Iraq indefinitely halted all flights to and from Syria and closed a border crossing with Iran as the government prepares for a security crackdown," a parliament member and an airport official said yesterday, the Associated Press reported, "The airplane official said that flights would be canceled for at least two or three weeks and that service had been interrupted on Wednesday. A member of the defense and security committee told the A.P. that the move was in preparation for the security plan. The state will decide when the flights will resume."

So it's already beginning. No resolution passed here in the senate is going to stop this new strategy. It appears to already be having some success. And my only concern is that the disagreement of some of our colleagues that it can't succeed will become a self-fulfilling prophecy merely because it could embolden our enemies and cause our allies to wonder whether we still have the will to continue until we have achieved our mission in Iraq.

But perhaps the message that I am most concerned about that these resolutions would send is not only to the enemy and to our allies but to our own troops and to their families. There's been quite a bit of discussion of a news report on the NBC "Nightly News" last

Friday, Brian Williams reporting, and specifically called upon Richard Engle, who was in Iraq torque report on what he had found there. And I'll work through his re report. But here's what Engle said. "It's not just the new mission the soldiers are adjusting to. They have something else on their minds. The growing debate at home about the war. Troops here say they are increasingly frustrated by American criticism of the war. Many take it personally, believing it is also criticism of what they've been fighting for. 21-year-old specialist tight letter Johnson is on his first tour in Iraq. He thinks skeptics should come over and she what it's like firsthand before criticizing."

Here's what specialist Tyler Johnson then said on the news. "Those people are dying. You know what I'm saying? You may support -- oh, we support the troops. Butt you're not supporting what they do, what they share and sweat for, what they believe for and what we die for. It just doesn't make sense to me."

Richard Engle then said, "Staff Sergeant Manuel Sahagun has served in Afghanistan and is now on his second tour in Iraq. He said people back home can't have it both ways. And now Staff Sergeant Manuel Sahagun is on the camera, says, "One thing I don't like is people back home say they support the troops but they don't support the war. If they're going to support us, support us all -- if they're going to support, support us all the way." Engle says, "Specialist Peter Manna thinks people have forgotten the toll the war has taken. The specialist says, "If they don't think what we're doing is a good job, everything that we've done here is. All in vain -- is all in vain." Engle concludes, "Apache Company has lost two soldiers and now worries their country may be abandoning the mission they died for."

Mr. President, we cannot send that message to our troops and to their families that we disagree with the mission that we're putting them in harm's way to try to achieve. As these three young men, our finest, have said, speaking to the American people, you can't say that you support the troops if you don't support what we're trying to do here, what we might try trying to accomplish. That's why we have to be careful about resolutions in the United States Senate.

Every senator has immense capability of expressing his or her point of view. We've all done that. We all continue to do it. We all can get before the cameras anytime we want to. We can let our folks back home know what we feel. And I dare say there are approximately 100 different opinions in this body of 100 people. We all have a little different view of it. And we can tell our constituents what we think. We certainly can communicate that to the President and people in the military. What we don't have to do is to go the next step and pass a resolution that, first of all, is nonbinding and has no effect on the implementation of the strategy, which is already beginning

and will go forward, but can have a very detrimental effect on our enemies, on our allies, and on our own troops.

When General Petraeus was here testifying before his confirmation, he was asked a question about the resolution to the effect, would it be helpful? He said, no, it would not be helpful. Then he went on to talk about the object of war being to break the will of the enemy. He said this would not help us. It would hurt us -- break the will of the enemy, especially in a war like the one we're fighting today. A war of wills. It is important for us not, not to send the significant that our will is flagging, that there is great disagreement with our country about the desire to continue.

In this war of wills, we should be unified and in support of the mission that we're sending our troops to try to accomplish. And in support of the general that we've just confirmed to carry out this mission. So I hope that my colleagues will think very carefully about the words that they speak, the actions they take, and reflect on what others will think of what we do here in this body.

We are not simply speaking to the president trying to send him a message. Everyone else in the world will get that message. And as much as we might manipulate the words in a resolution to try to bring 60 senators all in consensus to what the resolution says, we all know what the headlines the next morning are going to say all around the world. If a resolution like this were to pass: "Senate declares no confidence in president's strategy." Or "U.S. Senate goes on record as opposing bush plan." You can write the headline. Those are the words that will resonate around the world.

Let's not make any criticism of the President or his plan become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Let's be as united as we can in supporting our troops by supporting the mission that we're sending them on, hoping it will succeed, if we want, expressing concerns that we have about that but doing so in a way that doesn't undercut the message. We can do both of these things in this great, open society. People expect us to have great debate about important issues like matters of war and peace. And we can do that without undercutting the mission here.

I go back to where I started in quoting former Representative Lee Hamilton, the co-chairman of the Hamilton-Baker Commission. In his testimony yesterday here in the United States Senate, he said, "I guess my bottom line on the surge is look, the President's plan ought to be given a chance. Give it a chance because we've heard all of this. The general that you confirmed 80-0 the day before yesterday, this is his idea. He's the supporter of it. Give it a chance."

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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